DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 286 235 CS 505 701

TITLE	Alvin Ailey--Theatre Activity Packet.
INSTITUTION	New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn, N.Y. Div. of Curriculum and Instruction.
PUB DATE	85
NOTE	54p.; Photographs may not reproduce well.
AVAILABLE FROM	New York City Board of Education, Division of Curriculum and Instruction, 131 Livingston St., Room 613, Brooklyn, NY 11201 ($3.00).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Materials (For Learner) (051)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Class Activities; Curriculum Development; Curriculum Guides; *Dance; *Dance Education; Experiential Learning; Field Trips; Fine Arts; Primary Education; Teaching Guides; Teaching Methods; Theater Arts
IDENTIFIERS	Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater; Choreography; Dance Companies; New York (New York)

ABSTRACT

Intended for elementary school teachers who wish to implement a lesson on dance theater and dance as an art form to be used in conjunction with live performance, this guide offers classroom and extracurricular activities to teach children about various aspects of dance. Part 1 of the guide includes an introduction to Manhattan's City Center, a theater known for spectacular dance performances. Worksheets are included that show children the layout of seats in the theater and how to read a theater ticket. Additional sections include the history of the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, the American Dance Center, and tips for teachers on preparing students to see a live dance performance. Part 2 of the guide gives suggestions for teaching about dance as an art form, such as creating prior knowledge maps, offering vocabulary sheets of dance terms, learning about the job of the choreographer, and reading summaries of ballet plots. Part 3 of the guide offers activities to complete after seeing a performance, such as studying sample reviews and having the students write one of their own. (Appendixes contain a glossary of theater terms, a list of books and magazines about dance, and names and addresses of several New York dance companies as resources for teachers.) (JC)

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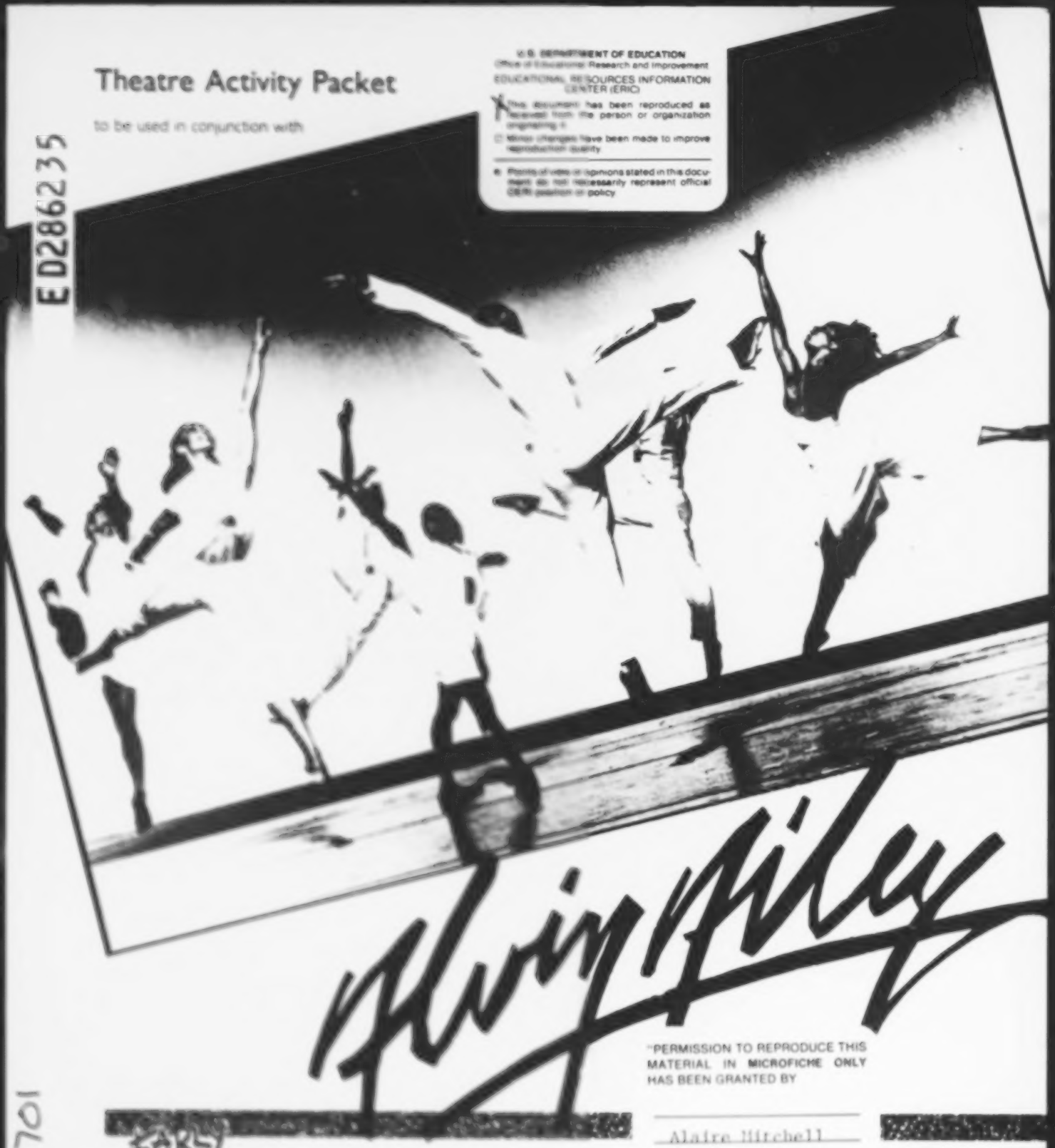

Alvin Ailey

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EARLY STAGES

Preview Performances
for New York City Schoolchildren
presented by
The Mayor's Office of Film, Theatre, and Broadcasting

New York City Board of Education
Division of Curriculum and Instruction
Office of Curriculum Development and Support

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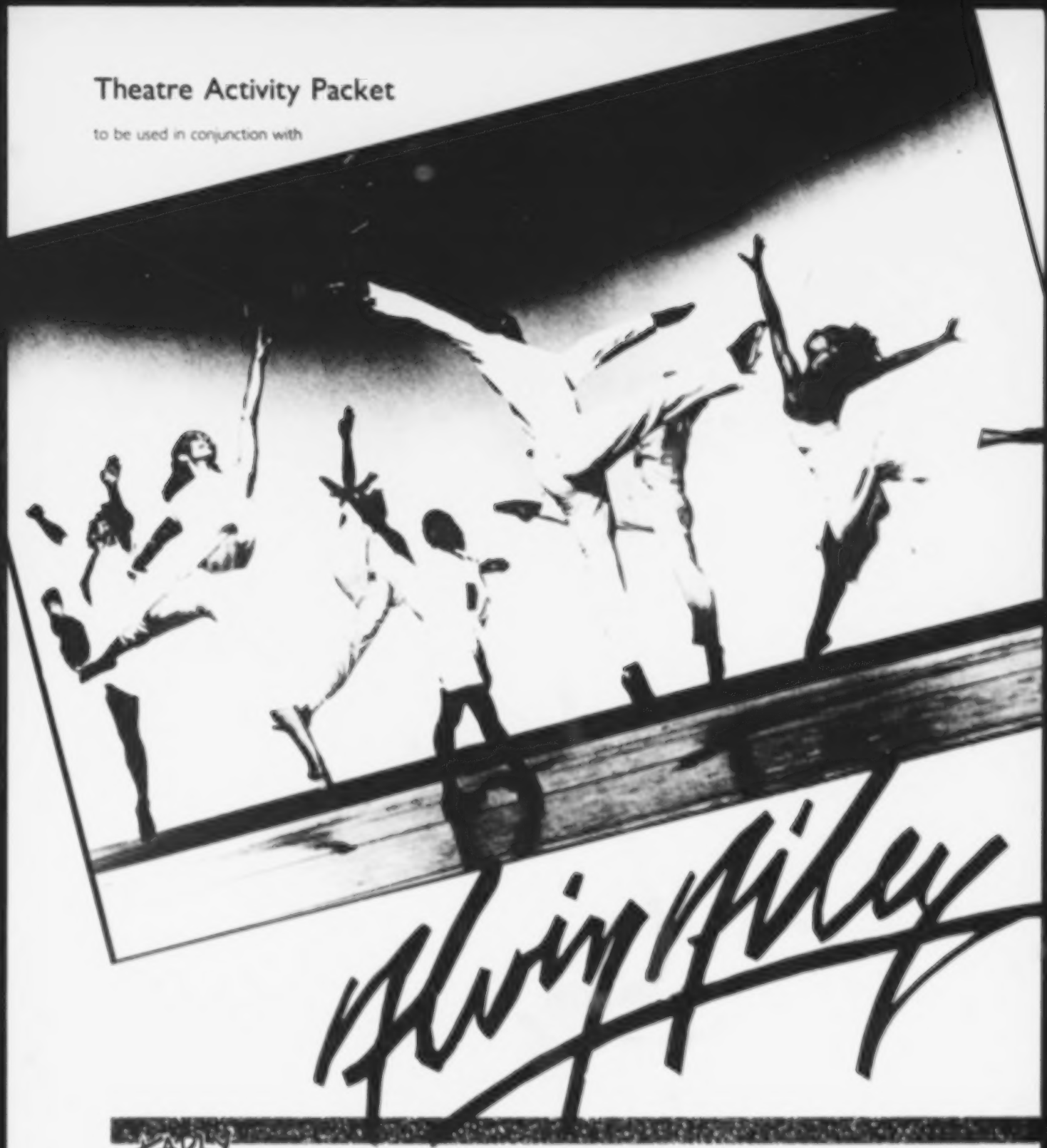

EARLY STAGES

Preview Performances
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New York City Board of Education
Division of Curriculum and Instruction
Office of Curriculum Development and Support

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Foreword

The Division of Curriculum and Instruction is pleased to participate in an innovative educational program, EARLY STAGES. In this project, selected teachers and students in grades four through nine from Community School Districts will attend special events in the performing arts. Through the EARLY STAGES program, our students have attended performances of The Tap Dance Kid, The Wiz, The Three Musketeers, Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, The American Ballet Theatre and Dance Theatre of Harlem. The current production includes four dance selections performed by the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

The accompanying Theater Activity Packet for this event has been developed to assist teachers in preparing students for this special experience and extending their learning in the classroom.

We see this program as a rare opportunity for students to listen and observe with greater critical interest and to share their observations through the activities provided in all areas of communication arts.

We wish to express our appreciation to the Mayor's Office of Film, Theater, and Broadcasting for enabling our young students in the program to share increasingly in the cultural riches of New York City.

Charlotte Frank

Charlotte Frank
Executive Director
Division of Curriculum and Instruction

Acknowledgments

This Theater Activity Packet was designed as a curriculum support in the area of communication arts for teachers and students, to be used in conjunction with the special performance by the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. These materials were prepared as a project of the Division of Curriculum and Instruction, Charlotte Frank, Executive Director. Morris Freedman, Deputy Executive Director of the Division of Curriculum and Instruction, provided overall supervision of this project.

Steven Tribus, Director of the Communication Arts Unit, organized and supervised the project. Olive Francks was responsible for the design of the Theater Activity Packet series. Tanya Kaufman revised the packet and wrote additional materials to accompany the current performance by the Alvin Ailey American Dance Company.

Edee Mezirow, Director of Development at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and Carol Dandridge, Development Assistant, contributed suggestions and materials for many of the activities included in this packet.

The Curriculum Editorial Unit, under the direction of Alaire Mitchell, Assistant Director of Curriculum Research (Acting), prepared this book for publication. Editing and production were by Eileen Fitzpatrick. Cover concept by Maureen Maguire, execution by Kent Beaty. Sandy Brown and Barry White were responsible for the printing.

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Part I
Preparing for the Performance

What Is EARLY STAGES?

The EARLY STAGES program is a joint effort of the Mayor's Office of Film, Theater and Broadcasting, and the Communication Arts Unit. EARLY STAGES got its name because the youngsters involved may be seeing their first major live performance and also because the matinees are usually scheduled during the preview period. The goal of the program is to expose students to a variety of theater experiences so that they will become as familiar with live theater, dance, opera and concerts as they are with television and movies.

Mayor Edward Koch inaugurated the program in 1983 at a special matinee--for 1,100 students--of The Tap Dance Kid prior to its Broadway opening. Since that time, students have attended performances of the Dance Theatre of Harlem, American Ballet Theater, and The Metropolitan Opera's Barber of Seville, as well as Broadway's The Wiz, The Three Musketeers and Big River: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.

The Mayor's Office of Film, Theater and Broadcasting raises private funds to cover the minimum expenses for these special performances, and also secures books related to the event for distribution to students. The Communication Arts Unit develops a Theater Activity Packet, including pre/post performance activities which teachers can utilize to integrate the theater experience with the communication arts curriculum.

The Office of Pupil Transportation has arranged bus transportation for each performance. Although the coordination of these bus arangements is a major effort, the Office of Pupil Transportation has always been able to accommodate EARLY STAGES events.

To the Teacher

Your class is about to participate in an exciting and rewarding experience--a dance performance!

We know that students can gain more from the performance when they have been given adequate preparation. With your guidance, students can review background materials on the dance, learn specialized vocabulary, and become familiar with production components, in order to fully understand and appreciate the upcoming performance. These activities can also help students improve their skills in related curriculum areas (vocabulary development, reading, study skills, oral and written communication) as they learn to value and appreciate the dance.

The activities presented in this packet complement the communication arts curriculum. You are encouraged to adapt the ideas (simplifying or extending) to the group's special needs, maturity, interests and abilities. At all times, student involvement in dance should be a primary goal.

An Introduction to City Center

These introductory sections have been designed to assist the teacher in planning pre-performance activities. A review of appropriate theater behavior as well as an introduction to the City Center and the Alvin Ailey Dance Company are provided to prepare students for the upcoming performance.

For many students, this may be their first trip to City Center. The following information about this well-known New York theater can be used to familiarize students with the building and its activities.

About City Center

City Center Theater, recognized as Manhattan's finest dance space, is located on 55th Street between 6th and 7th Avenues. It is the theater where such companies as the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, The Joffrey Ballet, the Paul Taylor and Merce Cunningham dance companies, and the Dance Theater of Harlem regularly perform.

Founded in 1943, City Center offered a variety of cultural entertainment during its early years. Such famous personalities as Helen Hayes, Shirley Jones and Beverly Sills have performed on the City Center stage. A new era dawned at City Center in 1976 with the formation of the 55th Street Dance Theater Foundation, which currently administers the theater primarily as a home for dance performance.

During the last six years, over two million dollars have been invested in the repair and restoration of the City Center facility. These improvements will enhance the theater's use in presenting dance, theater, music, children's theater, workshops and conferences.

Activities

- Ask students if they have heard of the City Center Theater. If necessary, familiarize them with the location of the building as well as the types of performances it presents.

- Discuss theaters students may be familiar with (Lincoln Center, Broadway theaters, local theaters, auditoriums, etc.) Ask students what they expect to find inside City Center, based on their past experiences at other performing arts events (sections of the theater, stage, lobby, restrooms, ticket windows, ushers, backstage areas, etc.).

- Familiarize students with the three seating sections of the City Center Theater:

Orchestra	699 seats
Balcony	1284 seats
2nd Balcony	762 seats

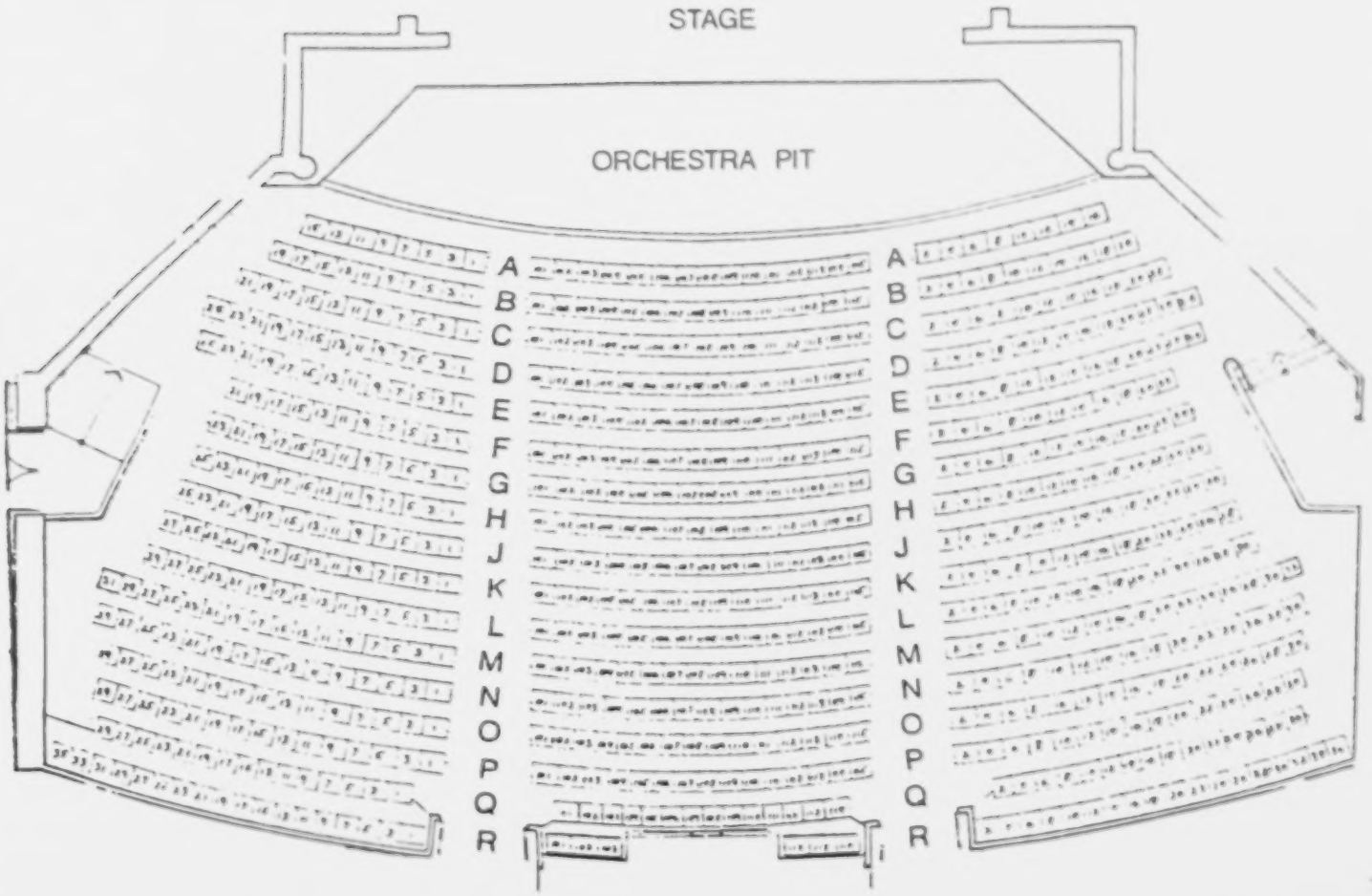
Worksheet 1 (Seating Plan of the City Center Theater) and Worksheet 2 (How to Read Your City Center Theater Ticket) can be used during this activity.

Worksheet 1

Seating Plan of the City Center Theater
131 West 55th Street, New York

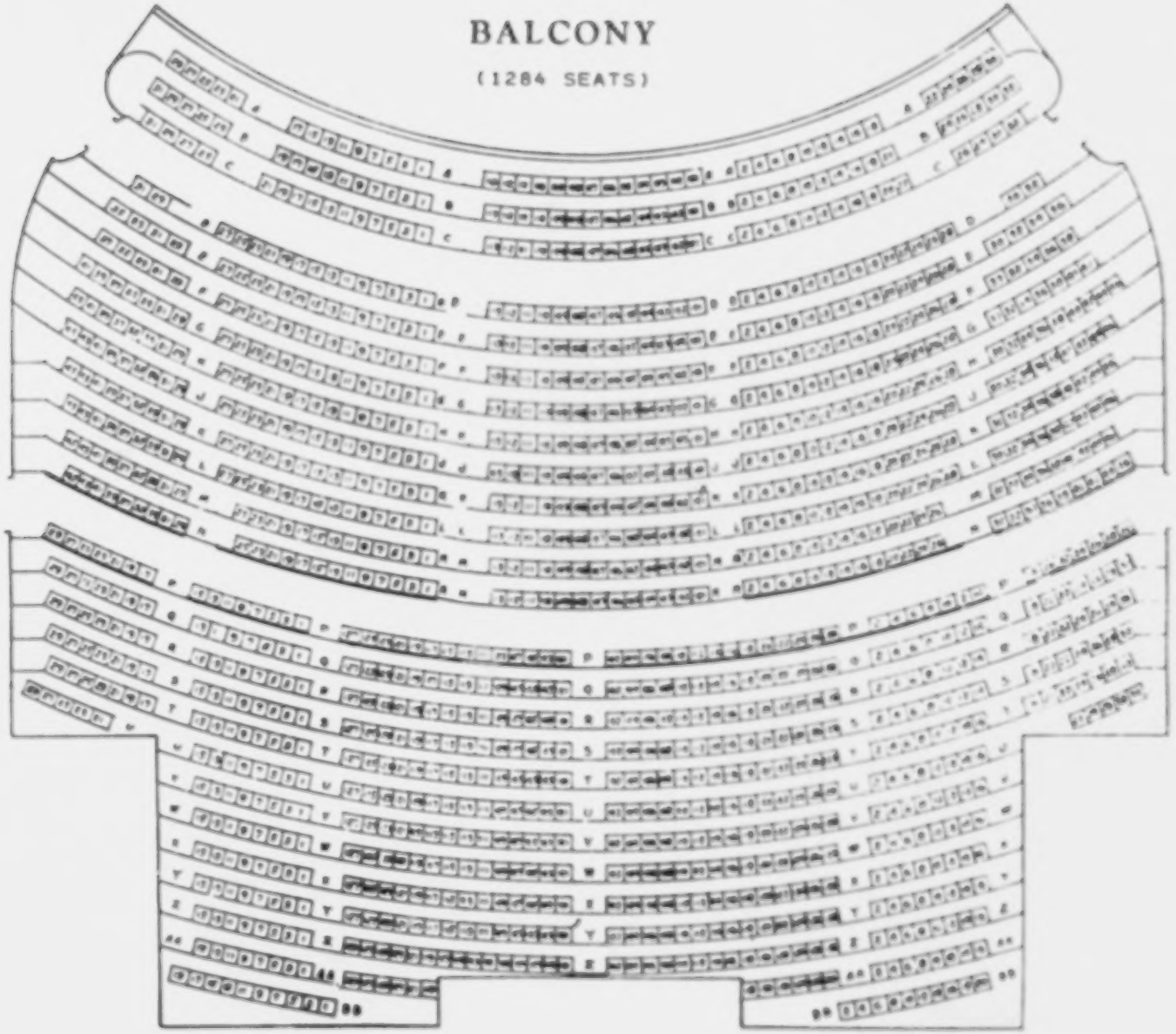
The City Center Theater is divided into three sections: Orchestra, Balcony and 2nd Balcony. All sections are divided into rows; each row has a letter; and each seat is numbered. Your ticket will give your exact seat location.

ORCHESTRA
(699 Seats)



BALCONY

(1284 SEATS)

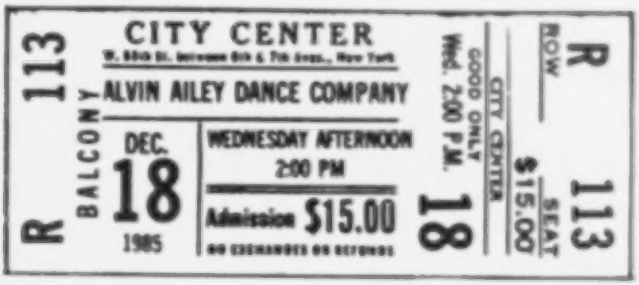


2nd BALCONY
(762 Seats)
18
17

Worksheet 2

How to Read Your City Center Theater Ticket

Your theater ticket will identify your specific seat location. Look at the ticket information on this sample:



Use the information on the ticket to answer these questions:

What is the name of the theater? _____

What is the address? _____

What is the name of the group that is performing? _____

_____

What is the date of the performance? _____

What time does the performance begin? _____

What is the price of the ticket? _____

In which section of City Center is the seat located? _____

What is the row and seat number? _____

Can you find this seat on the SEATING CHART? (page __)

Try to locate the seats listed below on the chart:

ORCHESTRA	K	9
ORCHESTRA	M	32
BALCONY	J	25
2nd BALCONY	D	13

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Alvin Ailey, choreographer, founder, and artistic director of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Company, is one of the foremost figures in twentieth-century American dance.

Ailey discovered dance at the age of twelve on a school field trip to the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. He began his dance career in Los Angeles with modern dance pioneer Lester Horton, who organized the first interracial modern dance company in America. Later, in New York, Ailey went on to appear as an actor and dancer in many Broadway productions.

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater was founded by Mr. Ailey in 1958 as an interracial repertory dance corps, committed to the performance of quality American works amd the commissioning of new works. The original company consisted of seven dancers, including Mr. Ailey. Alvin Ailey has succeeded in revolutionizing modern dance. He has created a group that blends ballet, modern, and jazz dance into a dynamic and appealing presentation. The company, with annual seasons at the City Center Theater, is one of the finest modern dance comapnies in the world and has a strong and devoted following.

Since its inception 27 years ago, the Ailey Company has performed for an estimated live audience of 15 million people, including royalty and heads of state. The company has performed at the White House, in 43 of the United States and in 44 different countries of the world. The United States Department of State has sponsored the Company on 15 foreign tours.

In 1970 the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater toured six cities in the U.S.S.R. This was the first time an American modern dance company performed in the Soviet Union. In 1982 the Company made a successful 9-week tour of the Orient, the Far East, and Europe (including Hawaii, Hong Kong, Japan, Italy, Greece, Israel, and France).

Today the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has 30 dancers, many of whom are products of the Ailey school, The American Dance Center. The Company's repertoire contains more than 150 ballets by 45 choreographers, including Talley Beatty, Bill Wilson, Glen Tetley, Hans Van Manen, Louis Johnson, George Faison, Elisa Monte, and Bill T. Jones. Approximately 50 works are by Mr. Ailey himself. The Company's active repertoire consists of 18 ballets.

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater also encompasses a school for dance training, for both the professional and the aspiring dancer, known as the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center. The American Dance Center was established in 1969. It began with 125 students and today serves more than 2,000 students annually.

Alvin Ailey's devotion to the development of young artists, combined with his interest in expanding and educating dance audiences, prompted the creation of the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble in the Fall of 1974. Under the artistic direction of Sylvia Waters, a former member of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, the Repertory Ensemble provides training and performance opportunities for exceptional students chosen from the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center. They perform as well as in prisons, hospitals, senior citizen centers and schools throughout the United States.

American Dance Center

The American Dance Center is the offical school of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. The Center consists of:

. A full-time Dance Certificate Program
. A Merit Scholarship Program
. A Children's Program
. A performing company--the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble

The American Dance Center:

. Produces well-rounded dancers, teachers, choreographers, technicians and craftsmen prepared to undertake a broad range of professional opportunities in dance.

. Provides professional instruction in a variety of dance techniques--ballet, modern, jazz, ethnic.

. Trains talented youngsters, particularly those from minority groups, for professional careers in dance.

. Provides scholarship assistance for talented youngsters who would otherwise be unable to receive professional dance training.

. Develops dance audiences and expands cultural opportunities for many, particularly in low-income communities.

Founded by Alvin Ailey in 1969 in a Brooklyn ghetto, the American Dance Center is now headquartered in a spacious modern facility at 1515 Broadway, New York. The faculty comprises some of the best teachers in the field of dance.

Classes in dance history, music, special exercise, repertory and dance composition are offered in addition to those in conventional dance techniques. Theater survey workshops are scheduled.

A certificate program is offered to prepare young dancers for professional careers. The most talented students in these programs are invited to join one of the Center's two performing units--the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble or the American Dance Center Workshop.

At its inception, 125 students were enrolled in the Center. Today the enrollment exceeds 2,000 students. Admission to the Center is based on audition. Scholarship assistance is available for students and Merit Scholarships are awarded to students of exceptional talent.

The Children's Program is structured for children between the ages of 7 and 15, with a Junior Division for 13- to 15-year-olds. Classes are held five afternoons weekly, and on Saturdays. Classes include ballet, modern and ethnic. Jazz is offered to students in the Junior Division only.

The American Dance Center is accredited by the Joint Commission of Dance and Theatre Accreditation of the National Association of Schools of Music and the National Association of Schools of Art. The Joint Commission of Dance and Theatre Accreditation is recognized by the U. S. Office of Education.

Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble

The Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble expands the training experience of exceptionally talented young scholarship students of the American Dance Center by offering them the opportunity to perform on stage before live audiences. The Ensemble offers young choreographers an opportunity to create new works; it also gives emerging costume, scenic and lighting designers an opportunity to work in a professional atmosphere.

Under the direction of Sylvia Waters, a former dancer with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, the fourteen-member Ensemble performs works from the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater repertory in addition to new works by young choreographers. The group performs before the general public nationally as well as in prisons, hospitals, senior citizen centers and schools. Technical performance requirements for this troupe are kept basic so that the Ensemble may perform in a variety of situations from concert halls to gymnasiums to parks.

This Ensemble was founded by Alvin Ailey in 1974. The most talented of the Ensemble dancers are eventually invited to join the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater. Thus, many Ensemble dancers are now performing with the Company.

"They performed with so much energy, electricity and talent it was worth the entire season's price of the community concert series just to see them."

- Redding, California
  Record Searchlight

Getting Ready to Attend a Live Performance

Audience Etiquette

. Ask students if they have ever attended a theater performance. Elicit special rules of behavior for the audience to be aware of while in the theater.

. As students discuss appropriate theater behavior, establish that audience etiquette, particularly at a theatrical performance, is extremely important, not only to the other members of the audience but to the performers on stage.

. You may develop a chart with the class and/or ask the students to write about their ideas.

Points to Highlight During the Discussion:

. Being a member of the audience is a special privilege. Whether at a graduation, special event or theater performance, appropriate audience behavior is essential. This includes:

- sitting quietly in the assigned seat
- being an attentive and polite listener/viewer
- refraining from talking during the event
- remaining with the class at all times
- remembering to walk slowly when moving from one part of the theater to another

. Students and chaperones are asked not to leave their seats except during the intermission. Any student needing to leave the auditorium before the end of an act must be accompanied by an adult chaperone.

. Sounds amplify in the theater and disturb others in the audience and distract the performers. A good thing for an audience to remember for all types of performing arts events is:

> Applause is the big indicator of the way an audience feels about a performance. If you really like a song, a performer, a special moment, your applause tells this. If people in the audience do not care for something--or even dislike something--they simply do not applaud or they applaud very, very softly. This conveys the message clearly.

. During the intermission, the audience can use the restrooms, stretch, or converse with one another. Students must be accompanied by an adult if they leave their seats and go to another part of the theater. Students must always remember to walk up or down stairs and through the theater. Since many people will be moving around during the intermission, it is important to stay with your class. When the intermission is over, there will be a signal (a bell or chime; lights blinking) which tells you to get to your seat.

For the Teacher: Hints for Supervision of Student Groups

1. Plan for the fact that the performance commences at 2:00 p.m. sharp. Be prompt for your scheduled bus pick-up.

2. When entering the theater, each student must have his/her own ticket to present at the door.

3. Do not permit any food or drink to be brought onto the bus or into the theater.

4. Please supervise the group very carefully; arrange for an adequate number of chaperones.

5. Make it clear that quiet conversation is fine, except during the performance. Talking that distracts or interrupts others should be discouraged at all times.

6. At intermission, arrange for those who must, to use the lounges. One adult should remain with the students who are seated, while the other leads a group to the lounges. Students must remain supervised during the entire intermission.

7. At the conclusion of the performance, arrange for your group to wait until they are called to leave their seats and exit from the theater.

8. Determine the location of your district bus. There will be supervisors from the Office of Pupil Transportation to assist you.

Part II
Learning About Dance

Dance Is . . .

Dance is a collection of people listening to a portable stereo and break dancing--in a park, on a street corner, on a stage. It is one hundred men on the island of Bali swaying and shaking through the traditional movements of an old tribal dance.

Dance is a court of nobles and ladies in France during the reign of Louis XIV, dressed in fine robes and powdered wigs, following the graceful steps and turns of a minuet. It is a group of peasants in a tavern, lustily stamping to a folk tune.

Dance is a class of ballet students practicing pliés and relevés. It is an Apache Indian doing the terrifying Crown Dance to summon forth magical spirits.

Dance is all this and much more. Dance is magic. It is a religious or mystical ritual. It is the means to express powerful emotions, to express deep feelings.

Dance is basic to all people. It is the most widespread and universal of all human activities. Some believe it to be the first art form, from the beginnings of human history. Indeed, almost all people on earth have dance traditions, and in most cases, dance forms differ from place to place.

Dance also differs from time to time. Styles of dance change as people change their ways of life. But, throughout dance history, dance has always sprung from peoples' basic beliefs and activities. When we dance or go to see dance performed, we become one with the human history of dance.

SOURCE: Melvin Berger. The World of the Dance. New York: S. G. Phillips, 1978. pp. 11-17.

Learning About Dance

This section includes suggested activities for introducing students to dance (dance idea map, specialized dance vocabulary, history of modern dance, questions and answers about the dance). The teacher may use these materials in a variety of ways (large/small group lessons, oral reports, individual research projects), depending on the interests and abilities of the students. A Classroom Critic's Checklist is included to highlight key items students should focus on during the performance.

Sample Lesson: Creating a Dance Idea Map

Objective:

To determine what students may already know about dance (prior knowledge) and extend this knowledge through class discussion and further research.

Activities:

Knowledge of dance will vary from student to student. In order to determine how much information students already have the teacher can develop a Dance Idea Map with the class:

- brainstorm with students what comes to their minds when they hear the word dance. To begin this recollection, ask students to share thoughts, ideas and feelings in any order, as they think of them.
- write their responses on the chalkboard or on a large chart (see example below).
- continue to build the Dance Idea Map until all initial contributions are made.

Once students have an understanding of how to develop the Dance Idea Map, ask them to construct their own versions. They can add to the information from the class chart as they work.

A sample Dance Idea Map is reproduced below:

- Ask students to share their work. Review the Dance Maps with the class and encourage students to identify major areas of interest. Students may want to learn more about specific topics by reading and/or conducting individual research projects. (Visits to school and local libraries as well as the Library of Performing Arts at Lincoln Center will assist students with their research.)

- Ask students to save their individual Dance Maps. They will be asked to add new information after the performance, in order to compare their knowledge about dance "before" and "after."

Questions and Answers About Dance

Teachers and students can use this series of questions and answers about dance in a variety of ways:

Individual Research - Students can select questions of interest, research the answers, prepare a written or oral report for the class.

Small Group Work - Students can explore the answers to questions during group work and present their findings to the class.

Interviewing - Students can interview peers, teachers, relatives, etc., to find the answers and present the results in a written or oral report. If teachers/students know anyone who is a dancer, or who attends dance performances frequently, these individuals can be called upon as resources.

Although several questions and answers are presented here, teachers are encouraged to develop a series of additional questions about the dance with their classes. A list of these student-generated questions can be displayed in the classroom and used as the basis for a unit on the dance.

Here are a few questions and answers that you may want to start with:

QUESTION: What is modern dance?

ANSWER: Modern dance is one of the few truly American art forms. It came about because dancers began to reject the restrictions placed on them by the strictures of classical ballet.

Over the years, modern dance has been constantly evolving. It originated as an art form that mirrored contemporary life through expressive movements that were natural to the body. These free movements have ultimately developed a disciplined structure of their own.

Today modern dance can be about almost anything. For example, modern dance can be about relationships, or it can be about someone like Duke Ellington, or about something intangible, like the feeling of flying. On the other hand, modern dance can be about nothing at all. It may use classical ballet movements or it can use movements that are noticeably unnatural to the body.

Fact or fantasy, structured or unstructured, modern dance is a personal experience for its creators as well as its audience. The personal nature of modern dance is one of the wonderful things about it. You and a friend can attend the same performance, see the same dances, and come away with a completely different experience. Better yet, you can see the same dance more than once and discover something new and exciting about it each time.

So, what is modern dance? If we must label it, we could say that modern dance is an ever-changing art form that uses a variety of movements which create and depict experiences. But for the spectator, interpretations of modern dance can be limitless.

QUESTION: When did modern dance begin?

ANSWER: Modern dance, the art of expressing new ideas and feelings through movement, began in California. In the 1890's a young dancer named Isadora Duncan was inspired by classical music and danced barefoot in light Greek drapes. Her dancing shocked a society used to seeing women in tight corsets and bustles as street clothes and ballet dancers in boned bodices, layered skirts called tutus, and toe-shoes on the stage. Isadora was born in 1878 in the San Francisco Bay area and grew up loving classical music because her mother gave piano lessons. She danced the way music made her feel inside, and her work changed the way people thought about dance. Many schools imitated her costume and teachers began to explore expressing feelings through dance rather than just telling stories.

In 1914, the Denishawn School of Dance was opened in Los Angeles by Ruth St. Denis and her partner and husband, Ted Shawn. They taught their students dances from many cultures (Indian, Japanese, Egyptian, and American Indian) to give them a wide vocabulary of movement. They toured the United States and later the whole world with dances based on these themes with wonderful costumes, elaborate sets, and a genius for creating stage atmosphere. They helped develop serious stage dancing that was not influenced by ballet. Martha Graham was a graduate of the Denishawn school who went to New York in the 1920's to develop her own special approach to movement. She formed a company in the 1930's that continues to perform worldwide. Her work in technique and choreography is internationally recognized and her approach is taught today to ballet dancers as well as others. The mainspring of modern dance, to move "from the inside out," has been accepted by all dancers as an important principle to learn.

QUESTION: How does someone become a dancer?

ANSWER: Aspiring dancers begin to learn their art by taking lessons with a dance teacher, often in a school such as the American Dance Center, which is the official school of the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater. A dancer studies by practicing every day, just as one learns a sport.

Ailey dancers go through a varied training program, which includes classes in dance history, music, the theater, special exercise and dance composition, in addition to regular classes in dance techniques.

QUESTION: How old should you be to begin dance classes/lessons?

ANSWER: In general, you should start when you are 8 or 9 years old, although some begin earlier and others start later. In this way, your teacher can help you to use your body correctly and can train your muscles carefully to do the special work.

QUESTION: How long does it take to become a dancer?

ANSWER: A dancer usually needs 8 to 10 years of training. To start with, a student takes classes once or twice a week. When the student is 11 or 12 years old, he or she usually takes class every day, Monday through Friday or Saturday. When students are about 15 years old, they begin to take 10 to 15 lessons each week, spending almost all their time in taking classes and practicing.

Students who are seriously thinking about a dance career often go to dance school until they are 17 or 18 years old. Then, if they are good enough, they begin their careers.

QUESTION: Why does it take a long period of time to become a dancer?

ANSWER: Dancing may look easy and effortless when you watch a well-trained dancer, but that is because the dancer has perfected each move, each step, each spin, leap or position. Then too, because dance is an art form, rather than a sport, each dancer must also learn to express and interpret a role or an idea so that the audience can see it (visually), understand it (intellectually), and believe it (emotionally). Each artist must learn to express a part in his or her own individual way, while staying within the framework the choregrapher has constructed..

QUESTION: Once he or she has learned all the steps, can the dancer just do any steps he or she wishes to do during a performance?

ANSWER: No, because a dance must be choreographed. It is the choreographer who designs or creates a dance, putting together particular steps and movements. The choreographer blocks the dance performance by working with one dancer or several dancers. In this way, the dancers learn the steps/movements by working directly with the choreographer.

QUESTION: What does a professional dancer do all day?

ANSWER: A dancer practices many hours a day. The professional dancer also takes class several times a week. A dancer spends a great deal of time practicing and improving his or her dancing, just as professional athletes practice continuously to keep in shape.

"No matter how good you are," a famous dancer said, "you always need teaching."

QUESTION: How long is a professional dancer's career?

ANSWER: Most dancers stop dancing professionally when they are 35 to 40 years old, about the same age that professional athletes retire. There are exceptions to this, of course, such as Rudolf Nureyev and Alicia Alonso, who are still dancing today. Generally speaking, a dancer's career is short, filled with practicing, dancing, studying; and it's likely to be marred by accidents while dancing (they pull their muscles, sprain their ankles, break small bones in their feet).

QUESTION: What can a dancer do when he or she stops dancing as a career?

ANSWER: Some dancers teach other dancers. An example of this is Alexandra Danilova, a former ballerina and great star, who today teaches and coaches ballet stars.

Other dancers go on to run dance companies, or become dance company administrators, while still others become writers or photographers or go into brand-new careers.

QUESTION: If dancers have to retire early, and if they work so hard, and get hurt sometimes, why do they dance?

ANSWER: Dancers dance because they love their art; it is the thing they most want to do in life. They are willing to go to any length, even dance while in pain, because they sincerely love what they are doing.

Additional questions can be identified and researched by students as the class develops its knowledge of the dance, for example:

. What are some of the most well-known dance companies?

. Who are the most famous dancers (past and present)?

. What are some of the most famous dance performances?

. Who are the people that influenced dance over the years (choreographers, composers, etc.)? Why was their influence important?

. How has dance developed through the years? (Students can create a time line about the history of the dance once they have completed their research.)

. How can different forms of dance (modern dance, ballet, jazz, tap) be compared?

Dance Language: How to "Talk" in Dance

The language of the dance is known by all dancers. Many of the "dance words" listed here were originally for use in classical ballet, but are now universal in all types of dance.

A dancer could go anywhere in the world and take a class. He/she would understand the teacher because many dance words are universal, that is, they are the same everywhere.

Dance is "spoken" mainly in French because ballet began 300 years ago in France. The ballet masters developed the terms we use today, and ever since the seventeenth century dancers have been using these same special words.

In familiarizing students with the "language of dance," the teacher can introduce/reinforce specialized vocabulary in a variety of ways:

- Students can be asked to locate "dance words" in their readings. Words can be listed on the chalkboard or on a chart.

- The class can brainstorm (in small groups) to define the words. More difficult words can be looked up, either in the dictionary or in a resource book on the dance (see Appendix for listings).

- Specific assignments related to the specialized vocabulary might include the following activities:

  a) word studies--for example:
  In dance, arabesque refers to a specific pose. What is an arabesque in architectural design? What are other origins of this word? Look it up in an unabridged dictionary. What other "dance words" have multiple meanings?

  b) Students can develop a section on "dance language" in their vocabulary or spelling notebooks. These words can be incorporated into daily language arts lessons.

  c) Students can demonstrate specific dance steps to increase their understanding of this specialized vocabulary.

  d) Students can choreograph a dance and present it to the class, illustrating specific dance steps during the performance (e.g., grand jeté, pas de deux, plié).

A Dance Dictionary

arabesque (ah-ra-besk)
A ballet pose. In an arabesque, the dancer stands on one leg and stretches the other straight in back. There are different variations of an arabesque, too.

attitude (ah-tee-tiud)
A term which comes from the Italian word attitudine, meaning "a way of holding the body." There are numerous variations of this pose, which is basically a vertical position of the body supported by one leg, with the other, knee bent, raised behind, and the arms raised high.

barre (bahr)
The wooden railing that is fastened to the wall of a dance studio. Dancers hold on to the barre for some of their exercises. It helps them keep their balance. Dance classes often begin at the barre.

chorégraphe (kor-ay-oh-grahf)
The French word for choreographer (derived from the Greek word choreia, dance and graphein, to write). One who composes dances and ballets.

élévation (ay-lay-vah-syon)
Literally means elevation. A term used to indicate the height of the jump attained by the dancer.

grand jeté (grahn zhuh-tay)
A big leap in the air.

leotard (lee-oh-tard)
A tightly fitting one-piece garment covering the body from neck to thighs or to the ankles, it is worn for dance practice and on the stage.

pas de deux (pah duh duh)
A dance for two people. A dance for three people is called a pas de trois (pah duh twah). Trois means "three" in French.

pirouette (peer-oo-wet)
A turn in which the dancer spins around on one foot. A dancer needs excellent balance to do one pirouette after another.

plié (plee-ay)
A special kind of knee bend. Dancers do a plié at the beginning and end of every jump.

révérence (ray-vay-rahnce)
A deep bow, the kind dancers make to the audience at the end of a ballet. In many ballet schools, the students end each class with a révérence for their teacher. It is a gesture of respect and gratitude.

tour en l'air (toor-ahn-lair)
Also called air turn - a complete turn that a dancer makes in the air

SOURCES:

Ruth Belov Gross. If You Were a Ballet Dancer. New York: Dial Press, 1979, pp. 46-47.

Thalia Mara. The Language of Ballet, An Informal Dictionary. Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company, 1966, pp. 9, 10, 33, 39, 71.

How a Dance Is Created

As students become familiar with the dance selections that will be performed (see page 30), the teacher can guide the class in a discussion of how a dance is created.

HOW IS A STORY TURNED INTO A DANCE?

The choreographer plans, composes, and directs the dance performance from a piece of music, a story, or an idea.

Creating a dance requires an understanding of how to combine movement, rhythm, design, and music into a powerful form of self-expression. As the choreographer hears the music, he/she composes movements and patterns into dance sequences to accompany the selection. The choreographer is a creator, an "architect" of the dance, inspired by images from the music and/or story, and the marvels of movement captured in dance.

The choreographer communicates his or her interpretation to the dancers through a specialized "dance language" which is universally understood (see Worksheet 3). The arrangement of dance movements and patterns is a long-term process which requires many revisions before the dance is completed.

WHICH COMES FIRST...STORY OR MUSIC?

The answer differs, depending upon the dance. Some dance performances are choreographed directly from a musical composition, while others are created to accompany a story that has already been developed.

Not all dances tell a story. Many of these non-narrative selections suggest a mood and extend music into abstract or patterned interpretations without following a specific plot or story line.

HOW DOES THE DANCE GET ON THE STAGE?

Creating and producing a dance performance is a cooperative effort. Many individuals are involved in coordinating all necessary elements of the production.

The set/costume/lighting designers, as well as stagehands, electricians, make-up artists, etc., all play an important part in helping the show to go on. These individuals all work together in planning sessions and rehearsals to coordinate their efforts so that the performance runs smoothly.

As students complete the Classroom Critics's Checklist (Worksheet 4), the importance of these key personnel should be highlighted.

Dance Summaries

The teacher can review these brief summaries of the selections to be performed, so that students are familiar with the various dance themes.

Fontessa and Friends
Inspired by "Fontessa," a song by John Lewis for his modern jazz quartet, "Fontessa and Friends" is a series of skits about a prima donna whose pretentions are destroyed by a bunch of lightly clad clowns.

- Anna Kisselgoff
The New York Times

Revelations
"Revelations" is a celebration of the human spirit that depicts the struggles and joys of Black Americans to ten traditional Afro-American spirituals.

- Joan Jacobson
The Evening Sun

Fever Swamp
"Fever Swamp" explores the way six men working together negotiate tasks that evoke trust and cooperation.

- Marcia Pally
The New York Times

Pigs and Fishes
Created as a result of Elisa Monte's facination with the dynamic of women working together, "Pigs and Fishes" is a post-modern all-woman piece.

- Lesa Doll
The State News

To the Teacher

Worksheet 4, "The Classroom Critic's Checklist," was designed to help students focus on specific items before, during and after the performance. The teacher can review the checklist with students, highlighting things to look for as they view the performance. Students should be encouraged to incorporate additional items that may be appropriate.

If possible, duplicate copies of the Worksheet for each student. This will enable pupils to keep an individual record of their responses following the performance, in preparation for writing their own review.

Classroom Critics' Checklist

A dance critic is an expert in dance and is also a journalist. In order to evaluate a performance, you should be aware of what to look for during the production. So, at the dance performance you are going to attend, you will want to observe carefully in order to remember your responses to the following items.

Here are some areas for classroom critics to consider before and after the performance:

STORYLINE

_____ Yes, there was a definite storyline.
_____ No, none existed.
_____ Other _____.

SETTING (time, location and staging of different scenes)

. If all the action took place in one place and time, tell where and when.

_____

. If there were different settings, name them:

_____

_____

_____

. Can you tell when the dancers shifted to a new idea or emotion? Did the number of dancers on stage change, from a solo or duet to an ensemble? or was there a costume/lighting change?

_____

_____

_____

SETS (scenery and props)

_____ Sets were realistic (for example, real furniture was used).
_____ Imaginative sets were used to set a mood.
_____ There was no use of sets.

. What different types of sets were used? _____

. How did the sets contribute to the movement and story?

_____

_____

_____

LIGHTING

. How was the lighting used? Did the lighting change frequently? When did it change? Did it change when the scene changed? How did the lighting (or lack of it--darkness) affect the dancing? Did you enjoy the performance more or less because of the lighting?

_____

_____

_____

_____

COSTUMES

. What made the costumes special or unusual? Or, how were they very traditional?

_____

_____

. How were the following used?

color _____

texture _____

style _____

different materials _____

. Which character or characters came to your attention most vividly because of costuming?

_____

_____

MUSIC

. How was music used with the dancing? _____

. Did the music highlight the story line? Did it highlight the characterizations? How, or why not?

_____

_____

. How did the tempo of the music and sound quality (loud music/soft music) affect the dancing?

_____

CHOREOGRAPHY

. What types of dancing did you see? Were there solo dances? Was there group choreography? What other kinds of dance numbers were there?

_____

_____

_____

. Did you recognize specific dance steps? Which ones?

_____

_____

CHARACTERIZATION

. How did the principal dancers develop their roles? What actions, gestures, movements made their characters memorable?

_____

_____

Worksheet 4

Before you go to the performance, develop your own class or individual Critic's Checklist to help you focus your attention and observe more carefully.

After the performance, study your Critic's Checklist and ask yourself (and your classmates) a few additional questions:

- What was most impressive about the performance? What were some special features that made this production really stand out?
- What was interesting (to the critic and to others in the audience) about these particular dances? Can you compare them to any other dance performance you have seen on stage or elsewhere?

Part III
After the Performance — Curriculum Activities

Curriculum Activities

These activities have been designed for use after students have seen the performance. Some activities are a follow-up to those introduced in Part II, and require a review of materials used earlier (the Dance Idea Map and Classroom Critic's Checklist).

Teachers are encouraged to supplement these post-performance suggestions with additional ideas and activities to help students extend the dance experience into the classroom.

Dance Idea Map

- Ask students to review their individual Dance Idea Maps developed during the pre-performance Introductory Lesson. (See page 18.)

- Encourage students to add new information to their maps now that they have seen the performance and learned more about dance.

- Students can continue to research major areas of interest. Written/oral reports, art work, group projects and a class newsletter about dance can serve to culminate research activities.

- Set up a display or bulletin board in the classroom after students have researched the dance fully. To make your class display come alive, include dance programs, playbills, dance photos, newspaper/magazine articles about the dance, etc.

Critics' Circle

- To prepare students for writing their own reviews, ask them to read published reviews of recent dance performances in newspapers and magazines. Ask students to cut out reviews that are of interest and bring them to class.

- Duplicate and distribute the sample reviews included here to discuss with students, noting the style that the critic uses as well as the content.

- As students analyze newspaper reviews about dance, guidelines for writing a dance review should be developed. Before students begin to write their own review, they should:

  - be familiar with the format of a review and specific items to include (name of theater, performance, dancers, choreographer, etc.).

  - reread their responses to the Classroom Critic's Checklist and determine how this information can be included in their reviews.

Duplicate copies of Worksheet 5, "Guidelines for Classroom Dance Critics." The suggestions listed on the worksheet can help students organize and write their review of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

Ailey dance troop 'strikes gold'

DANCE

By SHARON BASCO

THE ALVIN AILEY American Dance Theater opened a seven-performance engagement at the Wang Center last night and by the end of the final dance, Ailey's trademark "Revelations," the audience was clapping to the beat of "Rocka My Soul in the Bosom of Abraham."

It doesn't diminish. Enthusiasm for the vitality and passion of the Ailey company's rich repertoire continues into the troupe's 16th visit to Boston.

"Revelations" tells us why. It is a 25-year-old piece, and yet when it is danced it is felt afresh. Even well-known images, which might be thought of as cliches (albeit Ailey's own) — like the spread-eagle arms accented by limp hands and bowed heads — are delivered crisply, as if they were just learned that afternoon.

The Boston premiere of a piece by former Ailey star Judith Jamison also tells us why the troupe thrives. Ailey is constantly revising the repertoire, experimenting with works by a variety of choreographers.

He has struck gold with Jamison. Her hauntingly mysterious "Divining" is a triumph of grand proportion and sultry style.

Tuned in delicately to an eerie score by Kimati Dinizulu and Monti Ellison, the shape and pattern of a triad ensemble is subtly and masterfully reasoned.

Adventurous gambles are the rule, and they work: The head carries the impulse for wretching body thrusts; a slow, deliberate leg extension is savored; one arm is held up stiffly to heaven while the other dangles, swinging limply.

"Divining" is a complex, multi-layered dance with enormous theatrical flair. Remarkably, the work also is Jamison's first choreography.

THE ALVIN Ailey American Dance Theater, at the Wang Center for the Performing Arts through Sunday.

Billy Wilson has made many dances for the Ailey company, and "Concerto in F," to Gershwin music by the same name, is one of the finest. It reaches beyond the easy, jazzy vocabulary usually favored by Wilson, and into a discreet, balletic framework accommodating both the wit and energy of jazz and the smooth elegance of classical technique.

Ailey company programs continue at the Wang Center through Sunday.

The Boston Herald, Wednesday, February 6, 1985

45

THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

Wednesday, Feb. 20, 1985

Ailey dancers deliver it all in sizzling Fox performance

A Review
By Helen C. Smith
Staff Writer

Passion, pizzazz, polish and perfectly impossible feats of the body — what more can you ask for from a modern dance company?

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, appearing in Atlanta for the seventh time, delivered it all Tuesday night at the Fox Theatre. The company, which has performed around the world, has never looked better.

This 30-member multi-racial company was so wired for opening night you could feel the electricity crackle the moment they whirled on stage in "Suite Otis," a sassy, sexy, sizzling tribute to the late composer Otis Redding. All the dancers were in top form, some more so than Marilyn Banks and Masazumi Chaya, who together have enough panache — their talent goes without saying — to catch the eyes of those in the last row of the balcony.

Next, Donna Wood, one of Ailey's hottest stars, did the unbelievable. Back to back, with only a brief pause between, she danced two demanding roles, either one of which would have paid her dues for the evening. First she did "Cry," one of Ailey's masterpieces, with great passion and beauty. "Cry" is Ailey's tribute to black women everywhere — their joys, their sorrows, their hardships, their strength. The work, which was originally created for former Ailey superstar Judith Jamison, never pales.

Miss Wood followed her triumph in "Cry" with an equally stunning interpretation of the lead role in "Divining," choreographed by Miss Jamison. "Divining" is Miss Jamison's first choreographic effort, and it is a remarkable one. Though it has Ailey traces in some of the movements, it is not an Ailey replica. It is more African in feel than anything Ailey himself has created, and yet at the same time quite contemporary — like a primitive painting done by a sophisticate. Divided into three sections — "Seeking," "Resting" and "Moving On" — the piece catches the rhythms of life's various phases with originality and insight.

In a total change of mood, the company rounded out the Tuesday program with a super-charged rendering of Talley Beatty's "The Stack-Up," an urban-smart, street-fresh, very new piece of rock choreography about dancing until you can dance no more, loving until the magic fades, fighting until that loses its thrill. It's a stackup of impressions of a kinetic, aggressive, sensual, sometimes violent cityscape — quintessentially New York.

■ Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater: 8 p.m. Wednesday. Tickets: $10.25-$22.25.

Guidelines for Classroom Dance Critics

You are the dance critic for a major newspaper. Your job is to go to dance performances and review them for the public. You have your own column and byline.

You have been asked to write a review of the dance selections you saw performed by the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Include in your review:

- the name of the theater
- the names of the choreographers, principal dancers, and other persons involved with the performance
- the date you attended
- your reactions to this performance

. To prepare your review, make sure to go over your responses to the questions on the Classroom Critic's Checklist. Decide how you wish to organize the material, sketch out your review, and begin writing.

. After you have written a first draft, read the review to yourself, and then to a classmate or teacher. Decide if there is anything that you wish to change and write a second draft. After you have revised the review and it is ready for publication, print or type it below in the form of a newspaper column as shown in the sample reviews. Use additional paper if necessary.

Title of your column:

_____

By _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

. Another way to write a review of a dance performance is to plan it as though it will be used on a radio or TV show. To do this, you will need to develop your own format and style. Listen to or watch one or more programs that feature dance reviews or dance programs.

. Prepare your review. Then tape it or recite it in your classroom or over the school P.A. system, if you are invited to do so.

- What will you tell your audience about this performance?
- How can you (visually or through sound) make your report interesting enough to capture people's interest?
- Will you give the performance a rating (such as calling it a 10-star show)?

. A variation of this idea is to tape a few of your classmates' opinions in a person-to-person technique as though they had just left the theater. If you have no tape recorder, then write down what they have to say, in <u>their</u> own words.

Backstage at the Dance

An exploration of varied "dance related" jobs can help students develop career awareness and appreciate how individuals must work together to make the show go on.

ACTIVITIES

. Ask students to list all of the "backstage" jobs that may be connected to the dance performance. These may include:

dance teacher	electrician
stagehand	choreographer
costume designer	set designer
hair stylist	carpenter
make-up artist	physical therapist
lighting designer	masseuse
wardrobe supervisor	usher
dresser	company manager
box office attendant	sound staff
public relations staff	stage manager
fund raising staff	artistic director

. Discuss students' ideas of what these jobs entail and why they are necessary.

. Students can select specific jobs that interest them and try to learn more about these fields by:

- visiting a small local theater company or neighborhood high school that has a performing arts departme
- looking through Variety, Backs e, Ballet News or Dancemagazine for information about careers in the performing arts.
- inviting theater groups, individuals working in the performing arts, or schools that train people for these jobs to speak to the class.
- going on a backstage tour (e.g., the "Backstage at the Met" tour available through Lincoln Center).
- visiting the career section of a local library to research traditional and non-traditional careers in the performing arts.

Dance in the Media

These activities can be utilized to make students aware of the influence of dance in the media.

. Ask students to look in the newspaper and in TV Guide or in similar sources for listings of programs that feature dance. These may include live performances, films, TV documentaries, etc.

. Make a list of all the performing arts listings which students can find.

EXAMPLES:

Live performances (telecast):

Dance in America series

Programs that feature dance on TV:

Saturday Night Live
MTV
Fame
Dance Fever
Live from Lincoln Center
Solid Gold

Films (old and new):

The Turning Point
Beat Street
Flashdance
That's Dancing
The Red Shoes
That's Entertainment
any films starring Gene Kelly or Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers

Additional Student Activities

. Review one of these programs or films.
. Sing a song from one of these films or programs, or write down the lyrics in poem form.
. Do a photo montage, cut and paste newspaper or magazine pictures to show what the program is about, or to express your feelings and opinions about it.
. Collect the names of dancers (current or from the past) and persons connected with dance. See how many persons you can list without looking them up in a book, magazine, or newspaper.

Appendices

Appendix A

A Glossary of Theatre Terms

Arena theater (Theater-in-the-round) - The audience is seated on all sides of the acting area.

Backstage - The area unseen by the audience behind the stage and off to the side, including the dressing room area.

Breakaway (costume or prop) - An object that is specially prepared to break or split easily.

Blocking - The movement of the dancers on stage.

Choreographer - The dance director who creates the dances and movement patterns.

Cue - The line, business, movement, or effect which signals the next action or speech.

Curtain - The rise of the curtain signals the beginning and the fall signals the end of a scene, act, or play.

Downstage - The front of the stage closest to the audience.

Ensemble - A group dependent on several or all of the actors/dancers rather than on one major star.

Exit - To leave the stage. Also, the physical spot through which the actor/dancer goes in order to exit.

Flat - A single piece of lightweight scenery which suggests a wall or part of the boundary that makes up the set.

Front of the house - The auditorium or area of the theater where the audience gathers.

Gel - A thin sheet of colored plastic material placed over a light to shine a color onto the stage.

Offstage - The area behind the stage or on stage that is not in view of the audience.

Onstage - The area of the stage in view of the audience.

Paper the house - Give away free tickets to ensure an audience.

Plot - The arrangement of incidents which make up the story of the play or dance.

Proscenium - The frame of the stage opening which separates the audience from the playing/dancing area.

Rehearsal - The practice and repetition of a play/dance by the actors/dancers guided by the director to prepare for a performance.

Set - The scenery which creates the environment for the play/dance.

Stage left - The left side of the stage from the actor/dancer's point of view as he or she faces the audience.

Stage right - The right side of the stage from the actor/dancer's point of view as he or she faces the audience.

Technical - The non-performing elements of the production (lights, sound, and so on).

Upstage - The area of the stage farthest away from the audience.

SOURCE: Adapted from Patricia Sternberg, On Stage: How to Put On a Play (New York: Julian Messner, Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1983), pp. 147-149.

How to Give and Take Stage Directions

When a person directs a play or when a dance is staged, one of the problems to solve is how to give directions to the cast so they will move about on stage as the director wants.

A stage director or choreographer blocks a production. That is, he or she writes down the stage directions in standard symbols. These symbols correspond to certain places on the stage. Here is a "road map" of a stage:

		Upstage Center		
Upstage Right	UR	UC	UL	Upstage Left
Centerstage Right	CR		CL	Centerstage Left
Downstage Right	DR	DC	DL	Downstage Left
		Downstage Center		

- - - - - - - - - - The Audience - - - - - - - - - -

SOURCE: Adapted from Patricia Sternberg, On Stage: How to Put on A Play (New York: Julian Messner, Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1983), pp. 20-21.

Appendix B

Resources for Teachers and Students

A. Books About Dance for Children:

Dancing Is by George Ancona
E.P. Dutton New York, 1981

Dance: A First Book
Franklin Watts, New York, 1983

The World of Dance by Melvin Berger
S.G. Phillips, Inc., New York, 1978

The Dance of Africa by Lee Warren
Prentice-Hall Inc., New York

I Love to Dance by Gerry Zeck
Carolrhoda Books, Inc., Minneapolis, 1982

I'm Dancing
Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1981

B. Magazines:

Dancemagazine

Ballet News

C. Dance Companies in the New York Area:

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater
1515 Broadway
New York, New York 10036

The Dance Theater of Harlem
466 West 152nd Street
New York, New York 10031

New York City Ballet
New York State Theater
Lincoln Center
New York, New York 10023

American Ballet Theater
890 Broadway
New York, New York 10023

The Joffrey Ballet
130 West 56th Street
New York, New York 10019

Elliot Feld Ballet
890 Broadway
New York, New York 10023

D. Library Trip:

Library of the Performing Arts, 111 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, New York 10023, is the center for books on dance and related areas of interest. Call far in advance for an appointment to visit.

Additional copies of this publication may be obtained from the Curriculum Editorial and Production Unit of the Office of Curriculum Development and Support, Room 613, 131 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201. For information, call
(718)596-4902.